Helderberg Harmonies

Magdalene Merritt

3525
85
9
v 1

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
1800

Class PS3525
Book .E685H4
Copyright No. 1909

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

HELDERBERG HARMONIES

THE TORY SPY'S CAVE

Frontispiece

Helderberg Harmonies

BY

MAGDALENE MERRITT

Author of "Songs of the Helderberg," etc.

Edited by

M. G. KAINS

Associate Editor of American Agriculturist

Voorheesville, N. Y.
M. MERRITT
1909

TS3525
.E685H4
1909

COPYRIGHT, 1909, BY
MAGDALENE MERRITT

SCHLUETER PRINTING COMPANY
NEW YORK

©CLA253499

To

LOVERS OF THE

HELDERBERG

PREFACE

THE real feeling of all who with each new morning have instinctively turned their eyes toward the Helderberg—ever the same, serene, smiling, friendly mountain—finds best expression in the words of a friend of mine, a noble woman, who said, "I want always to live within sight of the Helderberg."

It is perhaps no more than natural that I, as a child of the valley, who played among the lights and shadows and fed upon the history and tradition of the mountain, should desire to share these feelings with a wider audience than my voice can reach. So I have selected such of my poems as I believe best breathe the spirit of the hill country, and here present them in permanent form.

To Mr. Simon Winne, of Indian Ladder, I am indebted for facts regarding "The Tory Spy," and so am able to present a picture of the entrance to the actual cave in which this man took refuge from the Revolutionary soldiers. From my own family history I have drawn the character of The Sheriff, who was Christopher Batterman, my father's brother-in-law. In some minor details the story differs from accounts given in

histories and books of reference; but whether these are due to tradition or to actual errors, I have been unable to determine. (See Patroon, Anti-Rentism, Van Rensselaer in encyclopedias.)

Through the kind courtesy of the Springfield *Republican, The American Agriculturist, Christian Work and Evangelist,* and other newspapers and periodicals, I am permitted to reprint some of the shorter poems which have appeared in their columns. From my former volume, "Songs of the Helderberg," long since out of print, I have reprinted "Nature's Voices," "The Hound," and "The Butterfly."

Thanks to Mr. Clayton Le Gallez, the landscape photographer of Albany, N. Y., I am permitted to present the half-tone views of some of the most interesting parts of the mountain.

M. M.

VOORHEESVILLE, N. Y.
December 1, 1909.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Fair Helderberg	13
Child's Prayer	14
The Hound	15
Morning in Summer	16
Listening Still	17
Helderberg Scenery	18
To a Song Sparrow	22
The Husking Bee	24
I Lift My Heart to Thee	25
Through Stormy Days	26
Nature's Voices	27
The Sawbuck	28
The Tory Spy	29
A Wise Plan	36
An Old-fashioned Garden	37
Little One	38
Echo	39
In the Hollow of His Hand	40
Not I	41
Memories	42
For Thy Care	43
Springtime	44
My Riches	47
Why?	48
The Sheriff	49

PAGE

The Redbird 59
Friendship 60
The Butterfly 61
When I Awake 62
Solitude 63
The Bird 64
The Path 65
To a Goldfinch in February 66
The Woman Who Wears a Smile 69
The Assessor 70
When? 72
My Neighbors 73
The Oriole 77
The Forehead of the Hill 79
The Woods 80
Cheerful Lamps 87
A Fitting Name 89
Signs of Rain 90
A Song of Gladness 91
Old Friends Grow Dear 92
Larkspur 93
Daily Bread 94
My Garden's Guest 95
Wealth 96

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
The Tory Spy's Cave	*Frontispiece*
Helderberg Mountains	16
Bear Path Near Rainbow Falls	24
The Battlements and Indian Ladder Road	32
The Summit of Indian Ladder Road	40
Rainbow Falls in Winter	56
Bear Path on the Face of the Cliff	64
The Neighbors' Houses	72

FAIR HELDERBERG

O MOUNTAIN fair, blue line against the sky!
Thy wooded steeps, thy cool secluded trails,
Thy dells, thy caves, and laughing waterfalls,
All rainbow-haloed in the mellow light—
How fondly turn thy loyal sons to thee
With pure delight to greet thy sylvan joys!
How tranquil are thy breathing solitudes
Among the chaos of thy constant rocks,
Dropped from the beetling battlements above,
Or nature-hewn by ever-toiling force!
From age to age these ancient stones proclaim
In fossil forms through ages speaking yet
A life that was, enduring through thee still.

The sea, fair hill, that hid thee from the sight
With troubled waves, but deathless witness left!
Ah, time hath healed and hid thy early wounds,
And docile peace broods gently on thee now.
No more, no more a direful flood may wreck
Thy sunny wooded slopes, thy mighty cliffs!
For thee, O mountain, gentler hands may twine
A fairer garland for thy noble brow,
A crowning sky of crimson and of gold.

In calm, in storm, or 'neath the galaxy,
No purple pomp nor pageantry of man,
Nor trumpet voice proclaims thy majesty!
More grand the hallowed silence of thy crest
Than aught that human splendor e'er essayed!
Though floods may rend, and summer's heat may sear,
Though autumn gay transmute thy green to gold,
Though winter wrap thee in his arctic robe,
In memory thou'rt clad in ever-verdant spring.

And so, All hail, Fair Helderberg, All hail!
Thou livest in the hearts of all thy sons,
Unchanged by time, by tide, by tempest rude,
Embosomed deep in fondest memory
And held in everlasting joy and love.

CHILD'S PRAYER

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I know Thou, Lord, Thy watch wilt keep
All through the dark and dreary night,
And when shall break the morning light
I pray Thee, Lord, that I may wake
To serve Thee still for Thy dear sake.

THE HOUND

HARK! hear the sound of the baying hound!
  Along the round of the mountain;
The echo calls, then it falls and falls
  Like the water of a fountain.
Oh, mournfully sad and strange and deep
The voice of the hound along the steep.

The bare cliffs rise till they touch the skies
  With the thin white mists upon them;
And cedar-trees in the morning breeze
  Wave spectral-like adown them,
Oh, hear it from out the woods again,
The cry that echoes from hill to plain.

The white clouds float like a phantom boat
  Till farther and farther going;
Toward the sky they airily fly
  In the west wind gently blowing.
And clearer the hound's deep bay rolls down
While from crag to crag the echoes bound.

HELDERBERG MOUNTAINS

"Blue line against the sky."—*Fair Helderberg*

MORNING IN SUMMER

SOFT shines the light on the gray dewy meadows,
Sweet blows the breeze at the breaking of morn,
Faintly away fly the last of night's shadows,
Earth welcomes gladly a day newly born.

Slowly the rays of the sunlight are streaming,
Sparkling like jewels the dew on the flowers,
Far on the mountain its glory is beaming,
Matchless in beauty with morn's golden hours.

Mists from the valley arise like a billow,
Airy white ghosts mid the tops of the trees,
Hiding the brook and the shadowy willow,
Wafting away on the breath of the breeze.

Rapturous notes floating in from the woodland,
Red bird and robin and chattering wren,
Joyfully back from the fair sunny Southland,
Thrilling the woods with their voices again.

There on the hilltop, the field, in the bramble,
Myriad numbers of free, joyful things,
Care-free and happily each one may ramble,
Insect that creepeth, and wild bird that sings.

Gaily the creatures are risen and moving,
  Bee on the blossom and hare in the wood,
Feeble their labor but cheerfully proving,
  Life is a seed-time and harvest of good.

Never can artist paint fair morning's shining,
  Never can singer voice more than a part,
All of their best can but leave the heart pining,
  Yearning and striving to reach nature's heart.

Fair is the earth as the blesséd Eternal,
  Faint are its far gleams revealed in the light,
Joyous the heavenly, truly supernal
  Touches the world in the radiance bright.

LISTENING STILL

Though oft I wander in the woods
  By day and after dark,
I never yet have caught the sound
  Of any dogwood's bark.

—*M. G. K.*

HELDERBERG SCENERY

WHAT! Nebo's lonely heights by Moses scaled
Reveal a prospect of the promised land
More exquisite than this!

Nay! All God's earth
Is ripe with promise—full fruition! Here
On Helderberg's deep-seamed and thoughtful brow,
Which aeons long has faced the elements,
We stand in breathless transport at the view.

Unveiled through misty distance, dark and blue,
The Adirondacks rear their sturdy heights,
Yet higher still, and grander to the eye
Vermont's Green Mountains pierce the fleecy clouds
And scratch the yielding azure with their spikes,
While far against the pale horizon's rim
The Berkshire Hills erect their purple peaks,
By soft remoteness mellowed, faint but sure
In calm eternal and immovable.

Far borne upon the mountain's furrowed front
The crystal springs o'erflow in trickling rills
That rush together confluent, at last
To dash among the rocks in some cascade

Or leap the sounding waterfall and straight
Remount to heaven in a cloud of spray—
Of diamond-flashing, rainbow-tinted cloud.

How rush the raging torrents with a roar
When spring has loosed the chain of winter's snow
Upon the rugged crags and ragged cliffs!
What mighty voices speak the maddened plunge
Among the rough and jagged rocks below!
Amid terrific thunders and the flash
Of lightning, dropping back like countless thoughts
Dispersed, and thus returning in the march
Of their existence, joyfully they bless
The lowly, heaving bosom of the earth.
Through fertile valleys sure they thread their way
To join the noble Hudson, peaceful stream,
Like lovely child in quiet, healthy sleep
Between the hostile, battled phalanxes
Of foot-hills sundered by his flowing tide.

Here meadows broad and rich with waving grain,
There stately woods or luscious pasture-lands
Between the crystal winding brooks appear,
And orchards bending, serried row on row

Outspread their branches near the rural homes
With promise of a harvest plenteous.
The narrow highways fleeing from the mount
Embroidered deep with lacy emerald
Entice the mind to wander far with them—
To what fair goal of mystery and joy?

Where glistening point the church-spires heavenward
The quiet villages play hide-and-seek
Amid embowered, billowed greenery.
When night drops down upon the sleepy day
And all the dome is spangled thick with stars,
See twinkling up in smiling mockery
The bright electric planets, mimic suns
And satellites, of towns and villages.
With cheerfulness they glimmer through the night
And homeward ever lead the wanderer.

At morn the Hudson skyward sends his mist
A cloudly billow hiding his fair course.
By fog enwrapped, the spreading landscape seems
A quiet sea, an archipelago
Whose isles are tree-tops thrust above the rack.
When soon the sun ascends the faint blue line

That marks where earth recedes and sky begins
The cloud, dispersed as by a magic hand,
Reveals the earth in lovely freshness decked—
In calm, in grandeur, and in quietude,
And heaven it greets with smiling matin face
In silence eloquently praising God.

Blessed vale where man may live in sweet content
In ever youthful days, beside his hearth!
Here, close to God, behold each year glad life
Renewed through earth's great pulsing parent heart.
A guarding sentinel keeps watch unchanged
Amid the storm and stress of waxing centuries.
God speaks a message through the still, scarred rocks,
The trickling streams, the breathing of the trees,
The raging tempest and the listening calm
That broods upon hale Helderberg for aye,
Or down the valleys pours a boundless wealth,
A flood of love and joy for all who heed.

TO A SONG SPARROW

"SWEET, sweet, sweeter, sweetest," you sing
When shy and fitfully the spring
Comes lagging from the south to bring
The pleasant days,
While gaily through the hedge you wing
With song of praise.

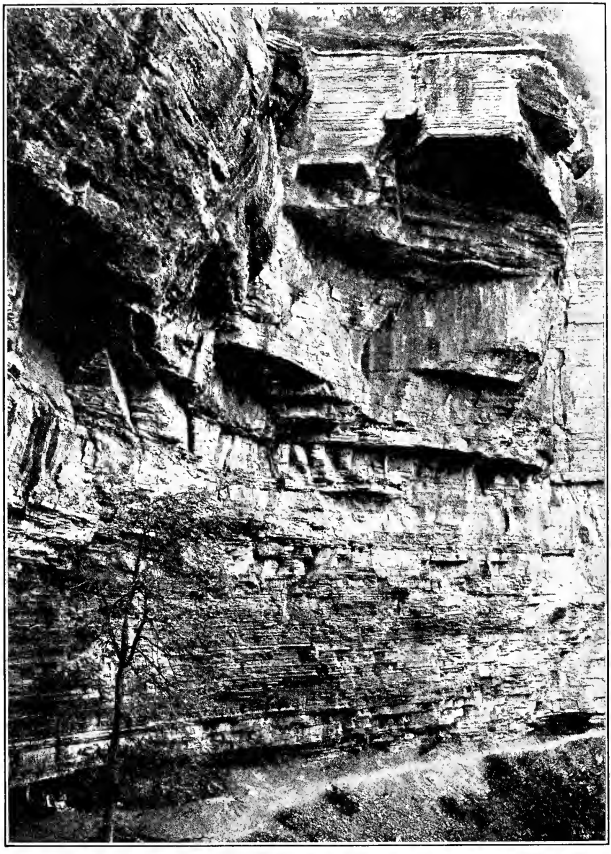
So happily and light, dear bird,
You trill your song, the clearest heard,
While yet the sap has hardly stirred
In brush or tree,
Glad your return was not deferred
You're telling me.

Is it the warming sky of blue,
Or shelter of the spreading yew
When sudden winds their utmost do
To bid spring stay,
That "sweet, sweet," still, though chilled quite through,
You pipe your lay?

How rippling come the notes pell mell,
So quick the bird makes haste to tell!
" 'Tis echo of a southern dell
I voice in song
And knowing you would love it well,
Brought it along."

Is "sweeter" small eggs in the nest,
Cuddled beneath your mate's warm breast?
Does wifey brood at your behest
From morn till night,
While just to sing is your whole quest
In gay delight?

"My mate and I, a happy twain,
Make welcome every soft spring rain
That falls when for a home again
We make our quest.
And then I sing a sweeter strain
About the nest."



BEAR PATH NEAR RAINBOW FALLS

Well, what is "sweetest"? I would hear
A language you could speak more clear.
I do not understand, I fear,
A single word,
And yet I love you well, you dear,
You bonny bird!

"Why, I have told you all along"
(Pipes back the bird in happy song)
"How can you get the story wrong
In stupid way?
That 'sweetest' is a nestling throng,
That's what I say."

THE HUSKING BEE

Some people think the husking bee
An insect very funny,
For all he does is just to buzz
And steal his fill of honey.

—*M. G. K.*

I LIFT MY HEART TO THEE

O God, I lift my heart to Thee!
Grant I may ever see Thy face.
Grave doubts and fears come tempting me.
Save me from all by Thy rich grace,
And keep me close to Thee.

One step I cannot see ahead.
O bend Thee down to hear my cry,
When earthly passions flaming red
Would move to put Thee, Saviour, by,
And bow with shame my head.

Dear Lord, without Thy constant love,
Without Thy ever watchful eye,
I cannot all my moments prove,
Or feel Thou hast not passed me by
And shut from me Thy love.

And yet, dear Lord, I'll do my part
Each day through confidence in Thee,
Assured if I but lift my heart
Thy blessing freely waits for me
And will not e'er depart.

THROUGH STORMY DAYS

THROUGH stormy days when all is gray
With wind and cloud and flying spray,
When dashing on the window-pane
We hear the patter of the rain
Tattoo its pleasant rhythmic play,
How sweet to know through all the day
Life's truest joys can never wane
Through stormy days!

Through every cloud must pierce the ray,
Transmute the somber clouds to gay,
And nature sound a blithesome strain
And man take up the glad refrain,
For all that's good must ever stay
Through stormy days.

NATURE'S VOICES

SUNNY summer morning
Sweet and fair,
Birds are singing gaily
Matins on the air.
Robins, wrens, and thrushes
One full chorus raise
Till the air is laden
With their praise.

Roses shed their perfume
All around,
Flinging dainty petals
On the mellow ground;
Roses red and yellow,
Pink, and white, and blush
Till the garden seemeth
All aflush.

Lightly gentle breezes
Kiss the trees,
Drowsy sounds the humming
Of the busy bees,

All of sweets seem blended
  To the sense and sight
On the clear cool morning
  Fair and bright.

Cometh all this beauty
  From above,
Kind and good and gracious
  Is our God of love;
Nature's countless voices
  Ever speak His praise,
Human heart, repeat it,
  All thy days.

THE SAWBUCK

The sawbuck's very docile,
  On it the wood is cut;
I've never seen it rampant,
  Nor have I seen it butt.

—*M. G. K.*

THE TORY SPY

A GAMBREL house, low, rambling, weather worn,
The homestead where my ancestors were born,
Stood in an orchard where a running brook
Oft drew the angler with his fly and hook.
The brook remains and murmurs as of yore,
But gone the house within whose open door
One autumn day I ran in childish glee
On hearing grandsire call me to his knee.

Beside the hearth where glows the back log's fire
I see him in his fine old-time attire
Sit straight and stately in his high-backed chair,
His ruffled shirt-front, curled and powdered hair,
His waistcoat small, knee-breeches prim and tight,
And silver buckles flashing in the light.
He looked a man who boasted some degree
Of learning, riches and authority.

I see the andirons in the flickering light,
The copper kettles shining smooth and bright,
The heavy timbers black with age and smoke,
And mantle clock from which a cuckoo spoke,

The candlesticks, the pewter plates and mugs,
The oaken floor o'erspread with home-made rugs,
And where the sunbeam through the window flits
With distaff there my grandame spinning sits.

I feel once more the magic of that room,
Its corners dark with mystery and gloom;
I hear again the tale my grandsire told
In thrilling tones of one both brave and bold,
The while I sit upon his knee so prim
And hear his words in childlike awe of him.
I see these pictures still before my eye
Just as I tell his story of the spy.

Long years ago, when over all this scene
Lay dreamy haze and mellow ripened air
Of autumn days, dear nature's quiet breast
Was calmly waiting for the winter's rest.
The trees denuded of their leaves stood tall,
And straight, and sentinel against the cliffs
Without a stir of twig in silence deep.
No longer hidden by its summer green,
Asleep the mountain seemed; yet never life
Spake strong to mortal sight nor more serene.
A misty veil enwrapped the azure heights

Of Helderberg's majestic solemn face,
Deep-seamed by mountain floods. The setting sun
Long shadows cast upon the rugged hill
And dropped the mists to valley and to plain.

What creeps amid the deeper shadows lone,
So stealthily, so silently alert?
A human form, the feet in moccasins,
Treads light the narrow path. The feathered head
Turns oft to glance about, and every twig
Is placed by careful hands as it had been.
At dropping of a single shriveled leaf
He crouches by a rock, a man in fear
Aroused by every faint and harmless sound.
He waits in dread suspense, then starts again
To reach a refuge safe, for him secure.
Up then with sudden tiger leap he springs
To clutch a ledge and disappears from sight.
When passed the entrance to the cave he throws
The deerskin blanket and the feathered band
Upon the rocky floor. In that faint light,
Dim though it is, no Indian chief it shows.
No hardy, fearless pioneer is he,
But one of England's loyal Saxon sons!

THE BATTLEMENTS AND INDIAN LADDER ROAD

Oh, wild the time of bloodshed and of strife,
Revolting colonists, and parent hand
Outstretched with war to conquer and subdue!
And is this man, then, hiding in disguise
A Tory spy? He is! This royal head,
This form so straight and tall, and lithe of limb,
A very god to look upon! His eye
With courage flashing cool, the heritage
Of victor ancestors, both strong and bold.
The brooding brow, the beardless chiseled chin
Set firm, the active hands and tawny hair.
The quiet, watchful, daring worthy foe!
No weakling thus would risk to act the spy!
With touch of sadness on his face he stands
Alone upon the mountain-side with God,
To watch the shadows lengthen into night.

This spot is sacred, too, for here there lived
A tribe of Iroquois, the Mohawks called.
With Tories oft they smoked the calumet
And fought as loyal brothers side by side.
This night of which I speak, when silently
The spy attained the rocky hiding-place,
It chanced at eve that I, when trudging home,
Came suddenly upon a camp above

The hanging cliffs that overlook the vale.
But twelve my years, and mortal fear of foes
Quick caused my heart to faint, so late alone.
That morn no one was there. In dread I hid
And watched the group so near their words I heard.
But little understood I Mohawk speech;
Yet still I learned enough to know they talked
Of someone near who waited for their meal.
Above the fire a steaming kettle swung
From which a squaw dipped tender bits of game
And filled a basket. This she gave a chief,
Who slipped away a shadow 'mid the trees,
While breathlessly I watched the course he took,
And down a ladder disappear from view.
As dusk drew down the somber shades of night
I crept away unseen and fled like deer
Toward my home and told what I had seen.

My father heard my story with concern,
"We drove the Tories out three weeks ago,
What makes the Mohawks now return?" he said.
"They know each spot in all this wilderness.
And can it be a spy returned with them
To stay in hiding now in some dark cave
Among the cliffs? I must report the thing."

At dawn the Colonel wakened from his rest
To learn the startling news:

"A spy concealed
In Helderberg!" he cried. "Arouse the camp,
And send at once a party for the search!"
The bugle sounded, soldiers came in haste
The meaning of this new alarm to learn.
With anger and amaze they heard the news
And burned each one when starting on the quest
In vengeance on a vanquished foe who dared
Return within their bounds to spy on them.
No trained and well-appointed soldiers they
But brave and earnest men each one who fought
As for himself. Well might a foeman quail
To meet in battle patriots like them.
For days they searched and watches left at night
To guard each path. What unknown dangers faced,
The beasts untamed that roamed the mountain wild,
Deceitful redmen camping high above.
What dark and gloomy cave but might conceal
The one they sought, unseen yet seeing them.

In vain they search! From out a hidden cave,
The entrance like to many others more
Of crevices among the placid rocks,

The spy looked down and grimly watched secure
Their every act as fearlessly they moved;
Nor knew their danger. Dearly would he sell
His life if found, this strange and silent foe!

A month elapsed. They found his hiding-place,
But his escape in safety had been made.
The meager remnants of the food he left
Bespoke the tortures grim he had endured
Through fearsome days the redman dared not come.
Had he e'er dreamed of banquets in his home
To wake and find himself alone, alone?
What dreadful fear and anguished loneliness
Heart-breaking groans for human friends and kin!
No record left! But if the rocks could tell
That silent cave would ring the echoes back
Of speechless thoughts and hopes and sighs and
prayers.

Forgot, O Spy, thy name and ancestry!
But Helderberg can ne'er forget. His rocks
And waterfalls are tuneful with thy praise.
No foe is he who lives in noble deeds
The promise of his steadfast loyalty,
Nor stops to offer e'en his life devote

If need be for the cause he loves and serves.
Forever do the true, the good, the great
Live through their deeds like blazing beacon fire!
Thy act, O Spy, shines out from Helderberg
To turn our gaze forever to its heights.

A WISE PLAN

When the golden sun is shining
Brightly all the day
It is easy to be happy
If at work or play;
But when days are dark and cloudy,
In the stormy weather,
Then how nice if storm and sunshine
Could but come together.

I have planned a little something
Seems to me just right,
It is when the days are dreary
I will be so bright
People will be saying gaily
When we come together:
"What a lovely bit of sunshine
In this stormy weather."

AN OLD-FASHIONED GARDEN*

In an old-fashioned garden glad Time stays his flight
From the blushes of morn to the tear-drops of night;
For the odorous breath of the Lily and Rose
Have a fragrance far sweeter than some would suppose,
And remembrance is tinted with youthful delight

When the halos of childhood return with the sight
Of Forget-me-not loyal and Sweet William bright;
And the zephyrs old scenes, ever-changing, disclose
In an old-fashioned garden.

When the Ruby-throat darts in his jewels bedight
From Campanula's bells to lank Larkspur's blue height
Every vision is realized; loved long-agoes
Instant fuse with the present and joy overflows
At the beauty resplendent these flashes unite
In an old-fashioned garden.

—*M. G. K.*

* Written after visiting the poet's garden in June, 1908.

LITTLE ONE

You are here within my heart to stay,
Little One, Little One.
I will never let you go away,
Little One, Little One.
Oh, I would not if I could,
For I love you as I should,
You are growing dearer every day,
Little One, Little One.

Many years I longed to have you here,
Little One, Little One.
For I knew you would be sweetly dear,
Little One, Little One.
Oh, the joyfulness I know,
Just to keep you warmly so,
Where no harm can come to you, nor fear,
Little One, Little One.

You are happy in the peaceful rest,
Little One, Little One.
Safely and belovéd in my breast,
Little One, Little One.

Oh, the best that I can do,
Is not good enough for you,
Fair and lovely spirit of the blest,
Little One, Little One.

ECHO

FLOATS a murmur faint and airy,
Hark! 'tis echo calling
Like the whisper of a fairy
On the mountain falling.
Echo, maid, where is thy dwelling?
It is where thy note is welling
Soft and tremulously knelling
Light as summer air?

Art thou true an aerie spirit?
Thy elusive voice—I hear it—
Yet I ne'er can get a-near it—

* * * * * *

Echo, art thou there?

THE SUMMIT OF INDIAN LADDER ROAD

IN THE HOLLOW OF HIS HAND

In the hollow of His hand, in the hollow of His hand,
Oh, the Lord will ever keep us till we reach the better land,
Every day each new-found treasure but reveals His constant care,
All the bounties of His blessings that surround us everywhere.
Can we fail to love and praise Him, that in safety we may stand
Assured of His enfolding love, in the hollow of His hand?

In the hollow of His hand, oh, the peace and happiness
When amid life's stormy billows all its care and eager stress,
Knowing that whate'er befalls us, nothing yet can do us harm,
When above, and all around us, reaches the Almighty arm,
Raising in our hearts an anthem that is solemn, sweet and grand,
Praising Him for His protection, in the hollow of His hand.

In the hollow of His hand, in the little things or great,
He will yet reveal His meaning, if we joyfully but wait.
For He loves us as a father, and He constant will defend,
So what cause have we to murmur at whatever He may send,
For the blessings that He gives us are but foretastes of that land
Where some day He will transport us, in the hollow of His hand.

NOT I

In spring I'm afraid to venture about—
Indeed, I am often dismayed—
For every big bud is ready to shoot,
And I'm such a coward I surely would scoot
Should ever a flower its pistil present
In fun or in earnest. I'd not be content
To watch the young grass as it brandished its blade,
Nor quietly stand when the bull-rush is out.
Not I.

—*M. G. K.*

MEMORIES

DEAR friend, you said that all is good
That day we spent together.
The time was fragrant month of June
And sunny was the weather.
We talked of people, places, things,
Of life, and love, and duty,
And all the choicest thoughts of men
And of this fair world's beauty.

Your way lies 'mid the marts of life,
Where hearts of men oft harden,
Mine in a quiet, peaceful spot,
An old-time country garden.
But unto each that perfect day
Came as a bit of leaven;
You minded me of bustling life,
To you my home seemed heaven.

Sweet breathing-places in our lives,
Dear memories to treasure,
To bind them fondly on our hearts
Those hours of purest pleasure.

Our lives may flow, the years may pass
And other friends surround us,
But never from that time can leave
The magic spell that bound us.

FOR THY CARE

Oh, Lord, we thank Thee for Thy tender keeping
O'er all our lives Thy loving watchful eye,
With ne'er a fear in waking or in sleeping
Sweet, calm and peaceful, for Thou e'er art nigh.

We lift our hearts in grateful adoration
And humbly, prayerfully, invoke Thy love;
We bow before Thee, wonderful Creator,
Whose daily mercies evermore we prove.

Oh Father, grant that every day our living
May show we daily live to serve but Thee;
A song of praise or word of love be giving
To teach some waiting child to come to Thee.

SPRINGTIME

It is springtime, come the bluebird and the robin on the wing
And their mating notes are calling everywhere,
And the glad new life is starting fresh and bright on everything
With the pure and thrilling rapture of the air.

Scent the fragrance of the furrow as the farmer turns the sod,
Daily following the plow with tireless feet;
While his horses tread the stubble piling mellow clod on clod
Rises up that welcome scent enticing sweet.

With the balmy air about him and the green upon the trees
And the sky above a calm and peerless blue,
From afar a promise greets him on the breath of every breeze
As a blessing on his labor good and true.

Harvest time and barns o'erflowing, eventide of peaceful rest,
These his cheerful, honest toiling to repay;

While the mystery of growing from the fields enlivened breast
Nature's new and varied wonders day by day.

Golden sunbeams shining brightly, flood the valley, hill and plain,
Lighting every quiet glade with glimmer fair,
All creation is rejoicing in a gay exultant strain
For the rousing throb of life is in the air.

From the earth it comes upspringing, with a joyousness for all
Sending forth anew with each succeeding spring;
From her warm and mystic bosom comes her soft insistent call
Blessing new with life and love each fertile thing.

Oh, the magic of the leaflets swelling fast on bush and tree,
Oh, the beauty of the perfect bud and flower,
Shedding fragrance on the breezes, luscious nectar for the bee,
Freely lavishing their sweetness every hour.

Every mother bird is brooding gently, warm upon her nest;
Like a flame her lover flashes up above,
While each thrilling note of gladness that o'erflows his gallant breast
Tells the tender story full of life and love.

On the soft and grassy meadows frisk the lambs in happy play
While the ewes re-echo oft their loving cry,
And the bobolink is singing as he upwards mounts away,
Dropping rich and limpid laughter from the sky.

On the water, gleaming shadows from the leaning trees above,
Shade the quiet pools where flashing fishes play,
And from out the leafy distance comes the note of turtle dove
In a tender mellow calling day by day.

Tuned to harmony, and peerless, the beguiling charm of spring
Is a paradise of beauty to the sight,
Every dulcet sound and blossom, each alert and living thing
Fill the hymeneal cup of Spring's delight.

MY RICHES

Oh, give me the woods for my pillow,
The blue sky overhead,
While I watch the tree-tops billow
From my soft and mossy bed.

Oh, give me the verdurous thickets
Where sweet wild berries hang,
While I hark to strident crickets
As they sound their rasping twang.

Oh, give me the forest-land flowers,
The calm of dingle, dell,
While I rest 'neath oaks' tall towers
Where the squirrels love to dwell.

These, these are my richest possessions,
More dear than wealth of Rome,
They are gifts whose rich accessions
Make the dear old earth a home.

And there where the water is falling
With tinkle clear and bright,
May I hear dear voices calling—
Happy laughter gay and light.

Oh, gladly I'll share all my pleasures
  If friends will come and see,
All these gifts, yea, all my treasures
  Yet of priceless worth to me.

So freely and lavishly given
  The Father's blessings fall,
Free as dew that drops from heaven
  Come His endless gifts to all.

WHY?

Whip-poor-Will? Why should I do it?
If I flog I'll surely rue it.
Tell me not that Will is vicious
Through his poverty pernicious.
Whipping is against my preaching—
And I practise all my teaching!
Chastisement is out of season
When it lacks a valid reason.
Tell me, therefore, or be still,
Why should I whip, *whip,* poor Will?

—*M. G. K.*

THE SHERIFF

Do, child, 'twas when I was a boy
In troublous eighteen-forty-one.
Your father's Uncle Christopher
Was sheriff in the Helderberg
All through the anti-rent revolt.
He was—

What was the cause of strife?
Oh, that is history. I think
'Twas nigh three hundred years ago
When Kilian Van Rensselaer
Bought all the land for miles around
To found a farmers' settlement.
Perhaps to feed his vanity,
Or maybe to perpetuate
His name, he called the great estate
His Rensselaerwick. Now the land
You'll find by looking on the map,
Makes three great counties, Rensselaer,
Columbia, and Albany.

With almost curbless privilege
Each new Patroon, as he was called,
Assumed the right to rule and tax,

For none there was to hinder him.
At last, in eighteen-thirty-nine,
When Stephen, last of the Patroons,
Was laid away, the heirs essayed
To sue the tenants for back rent;
But straight the farmers stanch opposed,
And, hence, revolt.

Well, Christopher,
As I began, was known to be
Intrepid, never would he halt,
Or hesitate when duty bade;
So when the heirs their papers filed
To dispossess Hans Stuyvesant,
Jan Bensdorp, Schuyler Ghent, Van Wyck,
(I don't recall his Christian name),
And Hendrick Voorhees for arrears,
Our Uncle Christopher rode forth
Arrayed in legal dignity
To serve the notices himself,
For well he knew the attitude
Maintained against the heirs-at-law
And scarce he'd trust another hand
To do important work for him.

With little parley every man
Destroyed the papers in his sight,
And threw the fragments for the breeze
To blow where'er it would.

Van Wyck,
I should have said, was burning brush
When Uncle Batterman arrived.
He thrust the paper in the fire
And lit his pipe! Our uncle's ire
Arose to boiling-point. Said he:
"Van Wyck, were I not sheriff sworn
No man in Helderberg would dare
Insult me as he has to-day.
My oath is sacred, but for once
I'll lay aside my sheriff's vow
And meet you as a man. Your size,
Your age and strength may equal mine
But I will teach you manners, sir,
You will not soon forget, I'll—"

"Stop!"
Commanded calm Van Wyck, "stop! stop!
You must not think that we intend
The least affront to you. Sit down

And hear me through. I'll not be long.
Now, Batterman," Van Wyck began
When Uncle Christopher had sat,
"The farmers are agreed to pay
No further tax and no arrears
Upon the basis which, you know
As well as I, has made us poor.
For more than sixty years Patroons
Have had no right to exercise
Or hold control as formerly;
But still they've forced us to comply,
Yes, forced us into servitude,
To own yet not to own our land,
To labor without pay from them,
To pay excessive fees for sales,
Excessive rent, excessive tax.
We'll stand no more. We have resolved
To rise and exercise our rights.
We will not recognize the law
Which claims that might is right;
But we will prove that right is might.
So, Batterman, mark well my words:
Toward you as man we have no grudge,
But if, as sheriff, you attempt
To force illegal law, beware!"

"Beware? Of whom shall I beware?"
Our uncle cried as up he leaped,
"Of you, Van Wyck, or Bensdorp, Ghent,
Of Stuyvesant, or Voorhees? No!
Not one, nor all of you combined
Can swerve me. When I come again,
As come I will unless you pay
Before the designated time,
I'll come with force to move you all.
So be prepared to sally forth
With goods and chattels, otherwise
I'll go the limit of the law
To move you out. You know me well!"
And vaulting on his horse he turned
And galloped home.

His speech was heard
By Ghent and Bensdorp who had joined
Van Wyck. Indignant these three stood
And glared their ire at horse and man
As long as they remained in sight.
Then spoke Jan Bensdorp: "I declare
I will not pay; nor will I move.
My home shall be my fort. I'll fight
Whoever tries to put me out."

"The heirs are wrong," said Schuyler Ghent.
"We all know that. They know it, too,
But think we'll cringe as aye before.
No more shall I. The wheat I raise
Shall no more go for rent while I
Subsist on rye. My boys and girls
No more shall double yarn at night,
Long after they should be in bed,
For blankets to be sold for rent.
Nor shall my wife raise hens and ducks,
Nor slave like me from dawn till dark
With but a single aim, to fill
A landlord's hungry money-chest.
I'll fight the sheriff ere I'll leave."

"There'll sure be need of violence,"
Declared Van Wyck. "The countryside
Is all aroused. Bold Batterman
Will surely come with officers;
But mark my words, he'll not evict
A single man. We've organized
(You know of this he's not aware)
To stand upon our rights, and soon
Shall Helderberg shake off the yoke
That spite of plenty keeps us poor."

With further parley off they went
To tell the other farmers all
That had occurred, and with them plan
How best to meet the sheriff's men
Should Batterman essay to come
To force them from their little farms.

The day arrives, and Batterman
Sets out with ten or twelve picked men
To oust the five whose names I've told
And take possession for the heirs.
The bracing air, the noble horse,
The road, the quest, all aim to please
Our Uncle Christopher, and so,
A horseman true, he spurs his steed
And canters at good pace ahead,
Until he reaches Bensdorp's farm,
The nearest of the five. His men
All join him at the farm and ride
Like cavalry upon parade.
Arriving at the barn they halt
And Uncle calls. Jan Bensdorp comes
And saunters slowly toward the group,
Not in the least disturbed.

RAINBOW FALLS IN WINTER

Says he,
"Good-morning, Sheriff Batterman,
What brings you out with all your friends
So early in the day?"

"You know.
I've come to get your rent arrears
Or, if you do not choose to pay,
To seize your stock and property
And move you out perforce. Now, sir,
Which shall it be?"

"I will not pay,"
Rude Bensdorp roars. "I owe no rent,
Nor can you prove I do. No, sir!
I've lived upon this little farm
Which father cleared, and worked, and stocked,
And now, you know the farm is mine.
I will not pay," he roars again.

The sheriff angered at the shout,
Dismounts in haste and leaves his horse
Untied. He walks toward the house
And calls his men to follow him.
But scarce he goes a dozen steps
When he is startled by a shout,

And looking forward to the right
He sees advancing from the wood
Threescore of painted savages,
Or so they seem, who, yelling, rush
With tomahawks, and bows, and spears
Across the intervening field.

The men and horses take affright
And off they dash with speedy hoofs,
Among them, frightened like the rest,
The sheriff's roadster runs at large.
In vain our uncle whistles shrill,
In vain he seeks a place to hide.
Jan Bensdorp runs into the house
And bangs the door in Uncle's face.
Then Uncle leaps into the well
To hide—the only place he finds—
But all too late; the redmen see
And quick they gather at the curb
And pull him to the top again.

Oh, what an act that then ensued!
A drama climax, no mistake,
When Uncle stood among the pack
And thundered imprecations fierce

Because he found himself entrapped!
By redmen? No! By farmers all,
But all disguised.

In shorter time
Than I can tell they hurry him
Across the yard behind the barn.
Some strip him bare of all his clothes,
Some roll a barrel full of tar,
And others bring a feather tick
Which has been airing in the yard,
And still another set appear
With bulging bags of turkey plumes.
And then with tar they plaster him
And deck him out with coat of down.
Upon his shoulders, arms and head
They stick the plumes as ornaments
Then turn him loose to wander home.

But why portray what more occurred?
Our Uncle Batterman fared well
For he escaped a harder fate.
'Twas but a single incident
In eight years' struggle for the right,
When tyrants tried to force their sway

But failed because the right must rule.
For more than sixty peaceful years
The Helderberg has now been free,
And men may buy, and sell, and rent
Upon a basis equable.

THE REDBIRD

THE woods and the morn give thee greeting,
  Brilliant bird with the tender lay;
My glimpse of thy beauty was fleeting,
  But I give thee a welcome to-day.
Unasked thou hast come and unbidden
  In the lofty tree-tops to sing,
Where safe from the curious hidden
  Is the sheen of thy scarlet wing.

No recompense thine but the gladness
  Of a life that is unknown to care;
Oh, bird, I rejoice that no sadness
  Mars thy notes that are thrilling the air.
Some day when thy gay wing hath taken
  The flight that the South bids thee start,
Thy song will my memory waken—
  A dream of thy joy in my heart.

FRIENDSHIP

I HAVE thy friendship! It is what I crave,
For it demands the best there is of me.
With thy approval all things fair I see.
I know that thou art learned, quiet, grave;
And when of all thy store thou freely gave
To me, then I in spirit bent the knee,
And prayed with deep desire that I might be
Forever on the heights where fair thoughts wave.

I have thy friendship! All I hold most dear
Exultant greets this priceless gift of thine.
This gift will aye encourage me to do
My work and triumph over doubt and fear.
For since I know thy friendship speaks to mine
My every fondest hope and dream comes true.

THE BUTTERFLY

A BUTTERFLY while flying low
Addressed a rose as white as snow,
And 'mid the stamens lemon yellow
He murmured soft, the saucy fellow:
"I love, I love, I love you, Rose,
The sweetest flower of all that grows."

He fluttered next, and not in vain
To woo a lily moist with rain.
He sipped from her corolla long
And sang another dainty song.
"Oh, fairer flowers cannot grow
Than golden lilies, ah, I know."

The honeysuckle's trumpet cup
Then held this fickle fellow up.
He drank his fill of nectar sweet,
But paused a moment to repeat:
"The honeysuckle is more dear
Than any garden flower here."

Then off he flew with languid grace
To kiss a pansy's gentle face.
He soft caressed her leaves of gold,
Then breathed again the story old
And while the south wind softly blew,
The happy pansy calmly grew.

From flower to flower all day he went
And flattery on each he spent.

WHEN I AWAKE

Psalm xvii, 15

WHEN I awake! As dawn's clear tide
Aye melts the gloom like snowy flake
Dropped silent on the ocean wide,
When I awake;
So everlasting Truth shall break
This mortal dream that seems to hide
The heavenly day. I'll then forsake
Whate'er the vision false descried,
Forget its terror and its ache;
For then I shall be satisfied—
When I awake.

—*M. G. K.*

SOLITUDE

THE bittern cries when night comes on,
I hear its mournful voice once more
Rise through the dusk and then 'tis gone,
The plaintive wail across the moor.

It loves the wild and solitude
Of lonely marsh and tangled brake,
The voiceless stillness of the wood,
And shiny shores of forest lake.

And to my heart the bittern's cries
A message bring but faint yet far.
In deeps where haunted silence lies
Is where my own possessions are.

They, they bring peace, the quiet ways
That nature's God makes great and good,
And nature's tangled, knotted maze,
Is through them fully understood.

BEAR PATH ON THE FACE OF THE CLIFF

THE BIRD

AWAY have I gone in the clear light of morning,
In the fair sunny South my swift wings I shall fold,
I have left the sere meadows all brown with dead clover,
To seek for a far brighter spot than the wold.

I sought you and found you when spring wafted fragrance
From meadows and forests and fair northern flowers;
And through the long summer my love found its treasure
In daintiest gardens and beautiful bowers.

The flowers are gone, but I treasure their beauty,
They gave me my dearest, my chiefest delight;
But now the cold winds fill their places with sighing,
My spirit with sadness was filled by the sight.

So far I have come over vale and o'er mountain,
From cold chilling blasts have I hastened to flee,
Once more in a garden of languorous beauty
I joy in the sweets that are open to me.

I loved you the more that your bright days were fleeting.
You were part of my life yet I bid you adieu.
But still 'mid these scenes of new pleasure I cherish
More fondly each hour my remembrance of you.

THE PATH

THAT'S beyond the sudden turn?
Down the path gay Jennie trips;
Guide or staff her light feet spurn,
Laughing words upon her lips.

Lacy ferns and stately trees,
Fallen rocks and waterfall
These are what blithe Jennie sees,
These and nature—lovely all.

Narrow, winding, woodland way
Maid with heart as light as air,
Lucky mountain hides to-day
One sweet treasure in its snare.

TO A GOLDFINCH IN FEBRUARY

Cold skies and snow-clad fields around,
And biting winds with warning sound
Sweep o'er thee, Goldfinch, on the ground
Here at my door.
Few are the crumbs, I fear, thou'st found;
Come, search for more.

I knew thee best through summer days,
When caroling thy limpid lays,
A bird of joy and witching ways
To please the eye;
But now I view thee with amaze,
And needs must sigh.

Thou tiny thing so weak to bear
The burden of this wintry air
Thou sure wast made for days more fair,
So seems to me,
Since thou wast ever debonair
And bright with glee.

But now the one beseeching note
That trembles from thy tender throat
Seems calling from that time remote

A friend to-day,
Yet only may its echo float
On thy lone way.

Thy gay companions long have fled
Where skies of heavenly blue are spread,
And fragrance of sweet flowers is shed
Upon the wind.
What strange desire possessed thy head
To stay behind?

Didst thou so love this land of ours—
None sweeter are than northern flowers!—
That loath to leave familiar bowers
Thou heededst not
The warning of the waning hours
And wert forgot?

Didst thou exchange thy black and gold
For this gray suit to match the cold—
For thy black cap that made thee bold
Thou wearest red—
And doth this tiny flame enfold
To warm thy head?

Thy soft gray down in pity sweet
Flutters to shield thy fragile feet;
For green boughs made, lo, here they meet
But cold and snow.
When comes the cutting hail and sleet
Where wilt thou go?

Since thou hast braved so long this chill,
I know thou hast undaunted will
To greet the Power that helps thee still
Bravely to live.
What destiny dost thou fulfil,
What lesson give?

Here at my door this wintry day
Thou'st found to help thee on thy way,
And cheerfully henceforth I'll lay
Crumbs for thy food.
What treasures, when those thrown away
Have done thee good!

Small bird, encircled by His care
That keeps thee safely everywhere,
May I achieve through hope and prayer
That light divine.
And bravely learn to do and dare
In faith like thine.

THE WOMAN WHO WEARS A SMILE

GIVE me the woman who never frowns,
  Whose face is an open book,
Who smiles right at me frank and fair
  With a sort of chummy look,
Whose happy eyes are bright and clear,
  With never a trace of guile,
Oh, the woman I hold so good and dear
  Is the woman who wears a smile.

I know a woman who ever smiles;
  Her heart is a mint of gold.
It matters not what her name may be
  Or whether she's young or old.
'Tis enough to know she will never fail
  If a cause be true and just.
Such the matchless grace of the constant heart
  In whom I have put my trust.

The world is better, the day more fair,
  Less thorns are in our path
When we meet the woman who wears a smile,
  When we hear her happy laugh.
God bless the woman who wears a smile,
  God bless her every day,
And bless the people whose tired lives
  She brightens along the way.

THE ASSESSOR

On a tall cattail clung a lithe little elf—
He was pulling some wool for his hose
And was merrily humming:
"The winter is coming;
I must guard against freezing my toes.
My wife she will spin, she will knit stockings, too.
She will knit me a nice tight cap
With a good big flap,
And I'll care not a rap
When the frost king comes with a snap."

But the cattail said: "Go along with you,
And pillage the milkweed's down.
Have you no feeling
My wool to be stealing
To leave me a poor bald crown?
For the milkweed can cover her head with her cap,
But how all the people would stare,
At my poll all bare
To the wintry air.
Little elf, do you call that fair?"

With pockets so full they were bulging out
The merry elf hopped to the ground.

With a cute little wiggle,
He said with a giggle:
"How like you that grumble does sound!"
For you know you don't need any wool at all
As the days of winter are told.
With your roots in the mold,
Like a lamb in the fold
You are safe from the snow and cold.

"But for me and my kind, oh, many the days
When 'tis cold for frolic and fun.
While you are wrapped deep
In your long winter sleep
We are busy from sun to sun.
I am sure you are growing too proud, cattail,
And you have no reason at all,
With your leaves thin and tall,
Where the jolly frogs call,
And your little brown bob in the fall.

"It was I who pointed your beauty to folks.
Where you grow 'mid the wiry sedge
You give quite an air
To the landscape fair
As you stand at the water's edge."

THE NEIGHBORS' HOUSES

The little elf paused and winked his eye;
Then he said, "Now, my friend, you must surely see
That each autumn to me
You must yield joyfully
When I come here to claim my fee."

He turned with a mischievous grin on his face.
In a twinkling he sped away
And the cattail said
With a shake of its head,
"What a fearful levy to pay!"
So now when you see him standing forlorn,
His bob in a wilful pout,
You may know without doubt
That the elves are about
And are pulling his soft wool out.

WHEN?

When does the henbane cackle,
Her wattles all aglow?
And I should so much like to know
When does the haycock crow?

—*M. G. K.*

MY NEIGHBORS

ONE spring a bluebird came to me
And asked me from my tall ash-tree
To build a house where he might rear
His youngsters for the coming year.
Perhaps you think a bird can't speak
Because he has to use a beak.
But when he sat an hour straight
Upon one bough thus to relate
In birdlike way by peering 'round,
First in the tree, then on the ground,
And calling, calling, pleadingly,
I knew he said that very tree
Was just the place if only I
Would fix a house for him up high.

Some shingles, and a painted board
I rummaged from my attic hoard.
A house I made with small round door,
A sloping roof, and smooth tight floor.
I snugly made each joint to fit,
Then placed it where he wanted it
And when 'twas done, that selfsame day

He and his mate began to lay
The straws to build their little nest,
He in his dainty-colored vest
Of gray and tan and coat of blue
That gleamed with beauty as he flew.
The nest was done. His wife I'd see
Upon her eggs sit tenderly.
And when the feeble chirps were heard
From every little nestling bird
He'd help all day to bring them food—
A tender father, kind and good.
Then both the birds with watchful eye
Soon taught the young ones how to fly.

Well, after they had reared this brood,
When by my rustic gate I stood,
I heard the master tell his wife:
"This is a merry, joyous life;
Let's raise some other youngsters, dear,
So they may reap the summer's cheer."
She fluttered gay from fence to limb,
And thus she blithely answered him:
"I'm ready, husband; straight away
I'll go into our house and lay."

The summer sun was waxing hot,
The grass burned in the pasture lot
When brood the second, one, two, three,
Flew to a near-by orchard tree.
The early fruit was hanging there,
The harvest apple and the pear,
While down along the fence there grew
A mulberry with fruit like dew.

The father and the mother bird,
Each on a fence-post hardly stirred.
Once more they had a little talk;
I listened from the garden walk:
"My wife," said father, "winter time
Is yet afar, we're in our prime,
The house looks empty and forlorn
Where our eight fledgling young were born.
We yet have time, I know, to rear
Still one more brood this happy year."

Oh, my! with fire how flashed her eye!
At once she flew and passed him by
Across the road in rapid flight,
Upon an apple bough to light
And chirp these snappy words (I heard):

"You surely are a foolish bird!
Your vest is faded and your coat
Is tattered from your tail to throat.
Then I am weary as can be
Of living longer in that tree.
Its leaves are shriveled up and dry.
These shady fruit trees take my eye.
Our younglings here are having fun
From early morn till set of sun.
I'll live with them, that's what I'll do.
If you are wise, sir, so will you."

She flew away, quite out of sight;
He did not follow her swift flight,
But sat dejected in the sun
And preened his feathers one by one.
Then having prinked the best he could,
He followed as a wise bird should.

THE ORIOLE

CLEAR notes full sweet and mellow
  Arising in a glad exultant strain
Reveal the oriole, in coat of yellow,
  Down in the shady lane.

A gleam of gold his darting
  Like flame whene'er he ventures on the wing!
What wondering thoughts in mortals will be starting
  When he essays to sing.

His fabric nest is swinging
  Amid the branches of the old elm-tree,
Where brooding calm, his mate lists to the ringing
  Of his rich melody.

Whence came his song of gladness?
  From what rich fount o'erflowing with delight
Hath he achieved the golden, sweetened madness
  That marks his happy flight?

Is love the tender story
  He warbles in his jubilant loud notes,
A crystal stream of glad triumphant glory
  That upward gaily floats?

Or came it from the Giver
  Of that great opulence whence blessings spring,
Who sends the sunbeams with their warming quiver
  Of life for everything?

Again that note is calling
  As on the topmost bough he sings and sways,
While blushing petals noiselessly are falling
  All through the balmy days.

He knoweth naught of sorrow,
  For free and gay he ever doth rejoice;
Nor needeth yet of any bliss to borrow.
  Deep joy swells in his voice.

When others sit repining,
  And rain is blessing every bush and tree,
From out the orchard where his coat is shining
  He sings his melody.

Through sunny days he ever
  Outpours the music of his gladsome strain;
All other birds may sing, but they will never
  Excel his blithe refrain.

Blest bird, each year returning
  With all the myriad beauties of the spring,
For thee my heart is ever fondly yearning
  To hear thee sweetly sing.

A bit of heaven descended,
  To dwell a living joy among my trees;
No melodies nor beauties e'er were blended
  More perfectly than these.

THE FOREHEAD OF THE HILL

TEACHER often declares in geography class,
  So sincerely I cannot impeach her:
"On the face of the hill you will find only one
  Very evident, prominent feature;
It's the brow of the hill," she asserts with a smile,
  "And on steep hills it's always a high-brow;
But on hills big or little, you'll never observe
  Anything you'd mistake for an eyebrow."

—*M. G. K.*

THE WOODS

SPRING

Who loves the spirit of the woods
Or understands their changeful moods;
The vibrant life of early spring,
The green aroused on everything,
Where trilling from the tree-tops tall
The birds send forth their madrigal,
The very mold beneath the feet
Sends forth a subtile fragrance sweet.
Life, life, is moving everywhere
And comes with every breath of air.
Each spirit answers to the call:
This priceless gift is free to all,
Free as the sun that shines to bless,
Free as the zephyr's soft caress.

From nature, lavishly there pour
Rich blessings in an endless store
Where flow the trickling woodland brooks,
From out the moss in quiet nooks,
The sweet Arbutus opes her flowers
Beneath the sun's first warming hours,
And sends the fragrance of her voice:

"The spring has come! Rejoice! Rejoice!"
Bright on the pines the sunbeams play,
The maples hide their tints of gray
And stand in vivid scarlet drest
To woo the robin in her nest.
Each quiet nook and sunny space
Shows an alluring eager face
For nature's beings everywhere
Admit the magic of the air.

SUMMER

How still the woods in summer lie
Beneath the sun's fierce sultry eye.
But when night's cooling shade comes on
Their pensive quietness is gone.
Æolian harps the breezes tune
Among the tree-tops, where the moon
Casts over all her silver light
To brighten somber shades of night.

In darkened spots what spirits wait
Where light hath failed to penetrate!
Fantastic forms and shapes they seem,
Yet vanish if a single beam

Of light creeps to their hiding-place
To show—but quiet, empty space.
Yet still upon the silent air
They trip their dances everywhere,
And eagerly each darkened spot
Is searched to find that which is not
To human erring sight. But they,
Elusive, take their mocking way
To murmur in the waiting ear
Strange whisperings one may not hear.
Though quick he turns the startled head
He finds the witching spirit fled,
With ne'er a form nor proof behind
To greet the active, searching mind.

What are these spirits of the wood,
That man has never understood?
All through the night in quiet woods
They play their pranks in sportive moods,
And hide behind each darkened tree
To mock the passer-by, when he
Alarms himself at twigs that break
And thus the ghostly echoes wake.
The spirits catch the startling sound
And toss it past him with a bound,

Until he flies in dread to hear
Such witchlike noises in his ear.
They gaily dance among the trees
And gambol with the passing breeze
And mock the hoot owl passing by
With human infant's wailing cry.
They sportive play and revel make
Until the morn begins to break
And then the light reveals the wood
In all its silent solitude.
And peaceful, most alluring fair
In the inviting morning air.
Its quiet charm is all its own;
The spirits of the night have flown.

AUTUMN

The glimmering sun with slanting beams
Through baring boughs sends golden gleams,
And lights the wood with luster rare.
Then mellow fragrance fills the air
From fruitage of the ripened year.
And tuneful fall proclaims good cheer.
Here, safely gathered ripened sheaves;
There, rainbow-hued October leaves.

The trees an added strength betray
Out-garnered from each summer day
Of heat and showers and grateful dew
To fare the winter bravely through.
Serene and bright their gray bark shines
Amid the verdure of the pines
That towering heavenward, lifted high,
The message bright catch from the sky,
Reflecting in their changeless dress
The Love that ever shines to bless.

Come with me to the gladsome wood
And learn of something great and good.
With whir of wing, with startled eye
A woodcock flashes wildly by
With constant faith in nature's power
To guard him thus in fearsome hour.
He quickly drops amid the brush
Nor moves to break the listening hush.
Have they, the living of the wood,
Learned more than man has understood?
Forgetting self to touch the spring
That moves with life each living thing?
How can Intelligence then prove
A better way wherein to move

Than keeping closely to this Power
To learn these secrets every hour?

WINTER

Strong, cold, enwrapped in glistening snow,
Their life sap buried far below,
The woods defy each wintry blast
That sweeps amid them fierce and fast,
Like howling demons through their limbs
Or grand, majestic funeral hymns.
The Storm King throws his challenge out;
His whirlwinds toss the trees about.
They, moaning, writhe and bend each way,
Their outer branches wildly sway
In rhythm weird and tempest's glee,
That shouts in keenest ecstasy
Until the darkened heavens quake.
And down the drifting storm clouds shake
Tremendous sighs and groans that sound
Like rumbling drums, as, bound on bound,
They leap like tyrants in their power
Then burst and scatter out a shower
Of hissing screams that cut the air
To voice a depth of wild despair.

Now with a lull they murmur low
And breathe unutterable woe,
Soft, tremulous, and far and faint
Protests the broken, pleading plaint
Far in the distance vanishing
A mystical and witchlike thing.

Then with a sudden furious rush
Shrieks back upon the sudden hush
A blast that voices louder still
Its triumph and unvanquished will.
What power the mighty tempest wields!
Before its strength the strongest yields
And bends like reed before its sway
When roars the storm like fearful prey.

But when its rage is spent and done
And shines the bright benignant sun
Upon the quiet of the wood,
Fair nature smiles serene and good,
Because obedient to that Will
That silent bids it: "Peace, be still."

CHEERFUL LAMPS

KATYDIDS and crickets here
  Keep up a din,
And from out the thickets near
  Where they'd crept in,
Fireflies are flashing out,
Dancing like the elves about
  Each little flame.
See them quickly come and go
While I vainly long to know
  What is their game.

Happy they must surely be,
  Gay little sprites;
Flitting so, so merrily
  On summer nights.
Silent! not a voice have they,
Nor another choice but play
  Without a sound.
Every one a tiny lamp
Glowing, flashing 'mid the damp
  Darting around.

Ho! you little fireflies
  What do you see?

You are surely very wise
  It seems to me,
Carrying your lamps along
So you may not travel wrong
  When 'tis so dark.
Flowers bloom when days are bright,
You ne'er open in the light
  Your flowery spark.

Here, and there, and everywhere
  Flash, flash you go,
In the damp and dewy air
  How burn you so?
Instant here and then afar
Like a brightly gleaming star
  Shining on me.
What! has something gone awry—
One I miss, he's ceased to fly—
  Where can he be?

Oh, you little struggling one
  Down in the grass.
Hurt perhaps and quite undone,
  I fear. Alas!
Carefully I'll rescue you
From the chilly drenching dew.

My! how you squirm!
Why! you're not a firefly
Struggling in my hands so spry!
You're a glowworm.

Creep away, you tiny mite,
Feebly and slow.
Sending forth your yellow light
Pale as you go.
Join your comrade fireflies,
Make men ope their wondering eyes
As free you give
Sparkling lights the nights to bless,
Giving them bright cheerfulness
Long as you live.

A FITTING NAME

Were I to give a truer name
To any butterfly
I'd call it something much the same—
I'd call it flutter-by.

—*M. G. K.*

SIGNS OF RAIN

A LITTLE elf in a jacket red,
He slapped his knee, and he bobbed his head
And said to his wife, he said, said he:
"It surely must rain quite soon. I see
The leaves of the ash are upside down;
There's a whirl of dust on the road to town—
Went opposite way the sun has gone—
We'll surely have rain before the dawn."

The stars hid away at the fall of night,
The moon gave never a bit of light
And the tree-toads called from tree to tree:
"It is going to rain, we can plainly see."
The lightning flashed where the stars had been,
And the thunder crashed where the moon crept in
From the rain that quickly came with a dash
On the thirsty earth and the road splash, splash.

But the little elf in his jacket red
Went out for a walk without hat on head
And was caught in the shower before he knew
And it soaked his raiment through and through.

Then he hurried home at a rapid pace,
But said to his wife with an odd grimace:
"When the signs are right for rain, I say,
One can take a bath almost any day."

A SONG OF GLADNESS

SING a song of gladness,
Wear a happy smile,
Laugh away all sadness,
That's the proper style.
Start it in the morning
Soon as day is light;
Every trouble scorning—
Keep it up till night.
When the day is dreary
Sing it loud and clear;
No one will be weary
Of a song of cheer.
People will be singing
Joining in the song,
Setting echoes ringing
All day long.

—*M. G. K.*

OLD FRIENDS GROW DEAR

Old friends grow dear and dearer yet,
  Their presence brings no vain regret.
  Each truth in us they fondly see
  With friendship's loving loyalty.
So many years faith's seal hath set

We would not break it, nor forget
  The days that passed so happily
  And brought the heart-unlocking key:
    Old friends grow dear.

Amid new scenes our friendship's debt
Unmeasured is. Then fondly let
  Our hearts grow young again to be
  Once more in that dear company,
The while we feel with eyes dew-wet,
    Old friends grow dear.

LARKSPUR

OH, LOVELY flowers tossing high
Your spires of shaded blue,
To sport with zephyrs passing by
And smile from dew to dew!
As bright amid the green you sway
All graceful in the sun,
The butterflies flit down each day,
To greet you one by one.

Oh, light as thistledown they drift,
So beautiful, so free,
While petals frail you gently lift,
Sweet faces, modestly.
Oh, blooms of blue, oh, wings of gold,
Could breath of summer air,
A more bewitching beauty hold
To grace a garden fair?

Dear Larkspur, answer me to-day
The thing I long to know
While through the trees the breezes play
And murmur, murmur low.

Pray tell me, Larkspur, can you see
  From out your countless eyes?
And will you tell confidingly
  How I can be as wise?

Oh, voiceless life! Nay, whisper swells
  A thought I know divine,
And to my inmost heart it tells
  Your creed—the same as mine!
No questionings! To do and be
  A part of all the Good,
To meet each moment joyfully
  Since fully understood.

DAILY BREAD

To-day I'll give what good I have,
  Nor think about to-morrow,
Content to know my sure supply
  Will come. I need not borrow.
Because I sow the best I have
  And keep on planting daily,
My daily harvest will be rich.
  My sheaves I'll carry gaily.

—*M. G. K.*

MY GARDEN'S GUEST

HERE, in my little garden plot,
On walks of velvet grasses,
Grow sprays of dear forget-me-not
To please her as she passes.

The purple iris, royal bloom,
In regal ranks is showing,
And on the air its rich perfume
The gentle breeze is blowing.

And pink and blue the columbines
Have ope'd with springtime weather,
And buttercups and eglantines
Are smiling close together.

The birds outpour their sweetest songs
From bending trees above it,
And honey-bees in eager throngs
Come, too, because they love it.

The bridal wreath shows double rows,
A happy omen truly;
It whispers, "Courtship's near its close,
I'll wreathe the bride's brow duly."

The lilacs nod, the tulips raise
  Their cups to greet her sweetly,
And lily-of-the-valley pays
  Its tribute here discreetly.

And down each perfumed winding walk
  She passes like a fairy
With gentlest cadence in her talk
  And steps so light and airy.

Oh, sweet my garden was ere she
  I took to wander through it
But now it breathes more fragrantly
  Than e'er before she knew it.

WEALTH

THE golden-rod
  May wave and nod
To show its pleasant charms;
  But does its gold
  Upon the wold
Distinguish gilt-edged farms?

—*M. G. K.*

DEC 27 1909

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Sept. 2009

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN COLLECTIONS PRESERVATION
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

One copy del. to Cat. Div.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 015 929 482 1